Can Pop-Up Shops Improve My Community?

Exploring the Linkages between Tactical Urbanism and Community Development

Applied Research Paper

Author: Khaliff Davis

Date: May 2015

Faculty Advisor: Daniel Immergluck

Table of Contents

List of Figures

INTRODUCTION

The problems communities face due to the underutilization of space and decline are wicked and complex; a one-size-fits-all panacea cannot solve the issue. New strategies used in conjunction with other proven methods, can provide alternative possibilities that reverse the decline of communities. Tactical urbanism is a strategy that is gaining in popularity to activate communities. Tactical urbanism, a far from new concept, has grown in recent years as a strategy to address diverse community needs. It's an umbrella term for a variety of low-cost, un- semi- and fully- sanctioned interventions (Lydon, 2012). It is achieved on the premise that improving the livability of our communities commonly starts at the street, block, or building scale. This approach allows a host of local actors to test new concepts before making substantial political and financial commitments. . Despite the growing popularity and efficacy of this concept, the public sector has not provided proactive support for these initiatives. The inability for the public sector to leverage community development resources to promote tactical urbanism in communities in need raises an issue worth exploring.

This paper argues the benefits of incorporating tactical urbanism as a strategy to supplement community development programs sponsored by the public sector. To make this claim, I identify linkages among the intended outcomes of both tactical urbanism initiatives and popular community development programs sponsored at the federal level. To further strengthen my claim, I conducted a survey identifying tactical urbanism initiatives located in areas considered suitable for community development work (i.e., low-to-moderate income census tracts). This approach identifies areas where tactical urbanism can have the greatest impact. Currently, the public sector is slow to support tactical urbanism initiatives. In addressing this issue, I reference relevant literature to discuss the evaluative and programmatic implications influencing the likelihood of tactical urbanism being considered as a viable

tool for federally sponsored community development programs. I conclude by making recommendations for maximizing the advantages of tactical urbanism within the public realm.

Part one reviews the major themes of community development evaluation literature. I specifically focus on the intended outcomes and evaluative criteria of a select number of federally sponsored community development programs. In part two, I provide a brief overview of tactical urbanism and the factors influencing its growing popularity. Part three uses a framework developed from the reviewed literature to analyze the connections between tactical urbanism and publicly sponsored community development programs. I base this analysis on the tactical urbanism research conducted by The Streets Plan Collaborative. Additionally, I use the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) as a prototypical federal program for comparison. I conclude by recognizing areas where the public sector can use tactical urbanism as a tool to further promote community development.

PART I: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order for stakeholders to consider tactical urbanism a legitimate strategy within the field of community development, it is worth understanding the role of community development and the evaluation of its various programs; specifically, how evaluators define community development, the intended outcomes of its initiatives, and the indicators measured to evaluate the progress towards these outcomes. This review of community development and its accompanying evaluative literature will help point to ways in which alternative strategies—namely tactical urbanism—can further support community development aims.

Community Development

Community Development Defined

Community development is primarily a placed-based initiative implemented at the neighborhood level. As Drier states, place affects our access to jobs, public services, shopping, and culture, our level of personal security, the availability of our medical services, and even the air we breathe (Drier, 2004). Since the neighborhood is an easily understood area incorporating the aforementioned factors, policymakers have implemented community development strategies that affect the neighborhood or, as Sawicki states, an area of roughly 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants with largely similar levels of education, income, and ethnicity, with a neighborhood elementary school at its core (Sawicki, 1996). Sawicki's interpretation of community development, however, is one of many - complicating the idea of community development and its impacts.

Researchers generally agree that community development aims to affect low-to-moderate income neighborhoods and is America's response to poverty. However, other observers have pointed out that its meaning remains notoriously hard to pin down (O'Connor, 1998). Defined as social and

cultural uplift, integrated social service provision, local economic development, physical renovation, and political empowerment, the term encompasses a large number of place-targeted interventions (O'Connor, 1998). Despite its varied interpretations, the Community Development Corporation (CDC) movement, the most prevalent community initiative in recent decades, is synonymous with creating and managing affordable housing to low income people (Vidal, 1992). CDC work is well documented and well publicized—a 1994 survey estimated that CDCs had produced almost 400,000 units of affordable housing in the last thirty years (de Souza et al. 1997). Moreover, trends in government finance, including the popularity of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, suggest that CDCs and their commitment to housing will continue to dominate activity within the community development field.

Despite CDC's focus on housing, I define community development as a broader concept with a more comprehensive goal than any one class of institutions can manage alone (Ferguson & Dickens, 2011). For the purpose of this research, I use a similar definition as Ferguson & Dickens. Community development is asset building that improves the quality of life among residents of low-to-moderate-income communities. Assets are physical capital in the form of building and tools; intellectual and human capital in the form of skills, knowledge, and confidence; social capital—norms, shared understandings, trust, and other factors that make relationships feasible and productive; financial capital; and political capital, which provides the capacity to exert political influence (Ferguson & Dickens, 2011). Throughout the history of community development, advocates have implemented various initiatives related to at least one of the criteria mentioned above. Since this definition is fairly broad, it offers the best opportunity to encompass tactical urbanism as a potential community development strategy, a point I argue in future sections of this paper.

Evaluation Research & Community Development

Developing effective evaluation strategies for community development initiatives, and measuring their progress, has been political and institutional as much as it has been methodological and substantive (Connell, 1995). For one, communities are extremely complex systems consisting of many inter-related structures and activities that, along with external factors, influence the very conditions any community development program seeks to influence (Abravanel, 2010). Secondly, the public sector develops community development programs relatively smaller than the targeted neighborhoods. This can make it unrealistic to measure impacts of a particular investment or project (GAO 2009; Hollister 2007).

In addition to these factors, community development initiatives suffer from the dichotomy of comprehensiveness and efficiency. On the one hand, these initiatives aim to impact a broad set of objectives in order to impact community well-being. On the other hand, in order to be sustainable in a number of facets, these initiatives must focus on a discernible set of problems and outcomes in a clearly defined geographic area (Connell, 1995). Evaluators must reconcile the two factors varying the effectiveness of an evaluation program.

An added complexity is the pressure from funders of these initiatives to generate substantive results. Evaluation is increasingly integral as community development matures and as political decisions at all levels of government focus on how to spend effectively (de Souza et al. 1997). Additionally, evaluators legitimize strategies through evaluation to influence community development goals. This is an important insight influencing tactical urbanism as a community development strategy. I provide a framework as guidance to think through the various methods of evaluation. This framework assists the reader in identifying the themes incorporated in the evaluative literature of community development initiatives.

When discussing evaluation of community development initiatives, it is important to understand certain key terms (Smith et al, 2010). While not definitive, these terms help elucidate common themes

addressed in later sections. Using the underlying logic, I develop a framework identifying the linkages between the field of community development and the strategy of tactical urbanism. I reference these terms throughout this paper and detail them below:

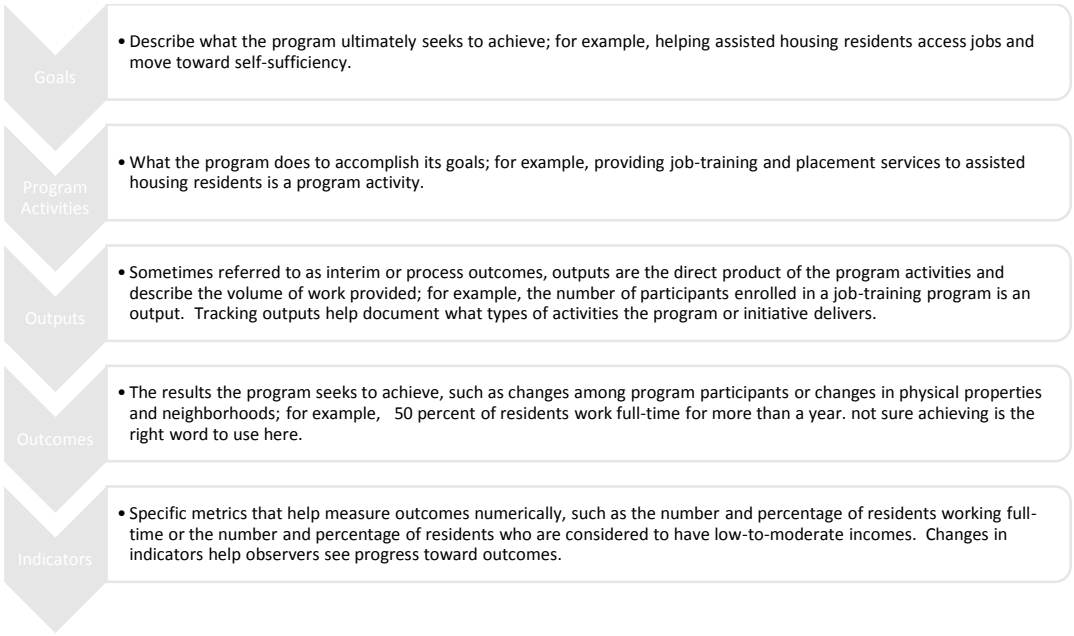


Figure 1: Evaluation Framework

The following is an account of federal community initiatives implemented over the years. The literature dealing with these programs is extensive and, as such, full coverage is beyond the scope of this review. Instead of exploring each initiative, I discuss the federal programs that relate most to the overall discussion of tactical urbanism and its inclusion in community development. I selected these programs based on the following criteria: continued operability, broad scope, emphasis on "place prosperity", and abundance of relevant data sources to generate a substantive review of its literature. Other programs potentially fit the criteria; however, to limit redundancy, they are not included in this paper. The programs selected for further review are the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the New

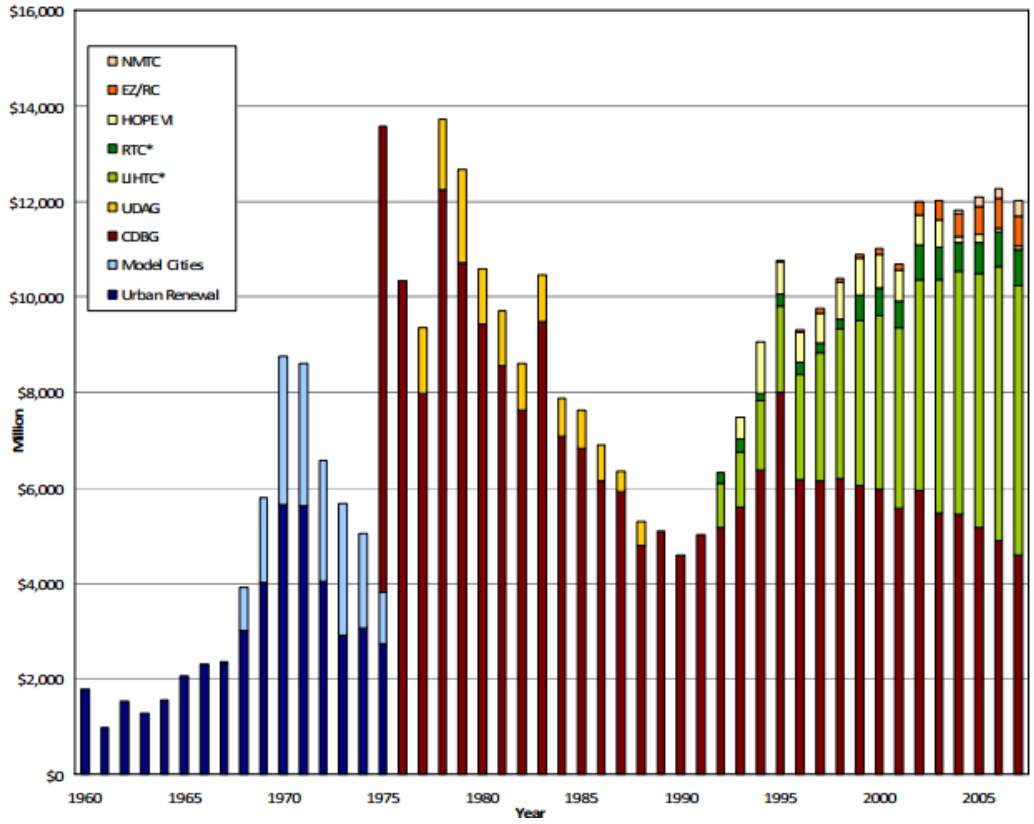
Market Tax Credit (NMTC), and the Choice Neighborhood Initiative. Following a brief history of federally sponsored community development programs, I will review these initiatives in the context of evaluation.

Brief History of Community Development

Through much of the 20th and all of the 21st century, there has been a steady stream of federal government programs intending to improve communities. These include, among others, the Small Business Loan Guaranty (1953-) and Venture Capital (1958-) programs, which in 1964 incorporated an explicit emphasis on economically distressed communities; the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant programs (1965–); the Model Cities program (1966–1974); the New Communities program (1968–1983); various National Park Service grant programs (1968–) the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program together with the Section 108 Loan Guarantee program, the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) and the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) (1974–); the EDA Revolving Loan Fund (1974–); the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) program (1977–1986); Rehabilitation Tax Credits (RTC) (1977–); the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) (1977–); the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program (1986–); the HOME Investments Partnership program (1990–); the HOPE VI program (1993–); the Renewal Community/Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (RC/EZ/EC) initiative—along with Neighborhood Revitalization Zones, HUB zones, and the Gulf Opportunity Zone (1993–); USDA Rural Development loan and grant programs relating to business development, housing, community facilities, electricity, telecommunications, and water (some, dating back to the 1930s and 1940s were reorganized in 1994); the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund's New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program (2000–) and the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (2009-). In addition, many states and localities have their own community and economic development tools such as state tax credits for business, tax increment financing (TIF), industrial revenue bonds (IRBs), industrial development bonds (IDBs), state enterprise zones, tax

abatements, inclusionary zoning ordinances and community benefits agreements (CBAs) (Abravanel, 2010).

To provide a basic understanding of the scale and trends in federally sponsored community development initiatives, Figure 1 shows the pattern of spending and foregone taxes associated with nine prominent federal community development programs, by year, beginning in 1960. These data are adjusted to reflect constant 2007 dollars. During the earlier portion of the period, the Urban Renewal program and later the Model Cities program accounted for between $2 and $9 billion annually, peaking in the early 1970s. With the advent of the CDBG program in the mid-1970s and the addition of the UDAG program, total spending peaked, varying from $9 billion to almost $14 billion annually through the early-1980s. Community development funding declined through the rest of the 1980s before increasing again in the early 1990s. For most of the 2000s, the programs continued to have accounted for approximately $12 billion annually (Abravanel, 2010).



Source: Abravanel, Martin D. "Evaluating community and economic development programs: A literature review to inform evaluation of the New Markets Tax Credit Program." (2010).

Figure 2: Community Development Funding 1960-2005

Community Development Initiatives

The Community Development Block Grant. Enacted in 1974, the Community Development Block Grant subsumed seven categorical programs: Urban Renewal, Model Cities, neighborhood facilities, housing rehabilitation loans, open spaces, water and sewer facilities, and public facilities loans (Orlebeke & Weicher, 2014). The program was intended to create "viable urban communities as social, economic, and political entities" through systematic and sustained action by federal, state, and local governments to eliminate blight and conserve and renew older urban areas and "to provide decent housing and a sustainable living environment, principally for persons of low and moderate income" (Galster, 2004). Despite its broad aim—outlined in the various goals within each of the previous categorical grants—local

decision makers heavily focused program funding on improving housing, not neighborhood-wide, conditions (Pooley, 2014).

CDBG spending patterns have been dynamic throughout the years of its implementation. During the early years, research on spending patterns of CDBG showed a widely dispersed spatial allocation (Dommel and Rich 1987). However, the amendments to the CDBG program encouraged communities to define areas for strategic investment "where concentration of public resources would produce a demonstrable difference over a reasonable period of time" (Urban Institute, 1994). However, in the early 1980s, agencies eliminated all federal guidance about targeting dueto "local pressures to widely distribute investments across urban neighborhoods".(Walker and Boxall, 1996). Local politicians used CDBG distributions as a tool to "please" their constituent base. Even so, in the early 1990s, a majority of cities used neighborhood-targeted CDBG distribution strategies, and more than 90 percent concentrated at least some of their CDBG spending in specific areas (Urban Institute, 1994).

Due to the emphasis of targeted CDBG distribution and a need for increased accountability by the federal government, some researchers devoted a large body of research concerning CDBG spending and its effectiveness to defining threshold levels in a designated geographic location. Specifically, area-specific, or geographic, targeting that deliberately channels resources to a clearly defined geographic location (e.g. construction of a new building). Targeting focuses resources to a specifically defined geographic location that is larger than an individual project but smaller than the geographic area over which the entity providing the resource has jurisdiction (Thomson, 2003).

The CDBG program provides an "area benefit" option, which allows jurisdictions to channel resources to a specific area where at least 51 percent of residents earn low or moderate incomes (Thomson, 2003). The rationale for this approach is that geographic-specific targeting concentrates resources in a limited number of specifically defined areas at a scale that is sufficient to produce

noticeable progress in community preservation or revitalization (Thomson, 2003). Proponents of the approach feel that targeting increases the resources allocated to the target area relative to non-targeted programs. Thus, the density of investment in the targeted areas increase while the total resources invested in non-target areas decrease relative to a non-targeted allocation strategy (Thomson, 2003). Researchers measuring the effectiveness of programs using this evaluation strategy measure the ideal scale of distribution that would provide measurable impact. These evaluators place less priority on the type and quality of the initiatives funded.

Aside from the spatial targeting, most scholarly research involving CDBG has focused on the following goals: where and how CDBG funds have been spent, which groups have been the prime beneficiaries, how efficient the plans and their implementation have been, and what political forces lie behind these allocations (MKGK Incorporated, 1980; Nathan et al., 1977; Rich, 1993; Urban Institute 1994; Wong and Peterson 1986). Up until 2004, only two studies evaluated whether and under what circumstances these investments have produced any measurable changes in the trajectories of the affected neighborhoods, and neither were primarily devoted to measuring the program's impact (Galster, 2004). Bleakly et al. (1983) examined an index of neighborhood conditions based on the average of four indicators: the percentage of structures in very good condition and the percentage of blocks in an area with well-maintained streets, little litter, and landscaping in very good condition. The Urban Institute (1994) analyzed statistics from a random sample of 223 census tracts drawn from a nationally representative sample of 60 cities. They cross-tabulated per-capita CDBG expenditures and changes in poverty rates, finding that tracts with higher spending had decreasing poverty rates and vice versa for tracts with stable or rising poverty rates (Galster et al., 2004).

The most recent CDBG study sought to measure the threshold level of CDBG spending in individual Philadelphia census tracts (Pooley, 2014). It summarized and attempted to classify census tracts (i.e. neighborhoods) receiving amounts greater than, between, or less than the two threshold

levels offered by previous research (Galster et al., 2006; Galster et al., 2004). The study's findings were consistent with prevailing research that distribution above threshold CDBG spending produces significant neighborhood improvements.

Pooley's study used property values as indicators of analysis, measuring CDBG impact. The study reviewed pre- and post- intervention house value trends to determine if property appreciation differed significantly between tracts receiving different levels of funding or compared with similar tracts receiving no investment at all (Pooley, 2014). A study by Galster et al. (2004) also used housing indicators to measure CDBG impact but with an additional business component. The study measured home purchase mortgage approval rate, median amount of home purchase loans originated, number of businesses, and overall poverty rates.

It is important to note that Pooley (2014) and Galster et al. (2004) used the indicators mentioned above as proxies to the much broader legislated activities and outcomes outlined in CDBG regulations. Recognizing the barriers inherent in properly measuring the effect of all of these components, the researchers chose indicators based on their ease of availability; specifically, how frequent the indicators were updated. Fully accounting for the various CDBG outcomes to achieve the goal of neighborhood improvement was not the exclusive determinant for choosing the data. This example of prioritizing efficiency over comprehensiveness is a concern that can carry major implications. For instance, an evaluator placing emphasis on efficiency might fail to measure outcomes that fully explains the impact of a program.

CDBG evaluation has largely used housing indicators, namely property values, to conduct research. The prevailing rationale is that sale prices are generally recognized proxy measures for many other indicators of neighborhood quality, such as crime and poverty rates (Urban Institute, 2005). Research has assumed these aspects of neighborhood quality are capitalized into the value of its

properties. Even so, the richness of information that is lost in not including indicators that measure other outcomes (e.g., community engagement) can overlook activities that might also accomplish the goal of improving neighborhood quality.

New Markets Tax Credit Program. The Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000 established the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program to provide incentives for private capital to flow to businesses or organizations situated in low-income, economically distressed communities that otherwise lack financing for community/economic development (Abravnel et al., 2010). The program works by providing federal tax credits to corporations or individuals in exchange for investing in specialized Community Development Entities (CDEs) that make debt or equity investments in qualified businesses known as Qualified Active Low Income Businesses (QALICBs).

CDEs report to the CDFI Fund to compete for an allocation of tax credits. In order to become a CDE, one must have a primary mission of serving low-income communities, or LICs. Those that receive tax credit allocations have five years to sell them to individual or corporate investors and use the proceeds to make loans to, or equity investments in, QALICBs. CDEs have one year to use the cash exchanged for the tax credit to provide loans or investments to business communities located in LICs for development of commercial, industrial or retail real estate projects and for-sale housing; to invest in or loan to other CDEs; to purchase qualified loans from other CDEs; or to provide certain financial counseling services to business and residents in low-income communities (Abravnel et al, 2010).

Abravanel et al. (2013) of the Urban Land Institute has perhaps done the most extensive evaluation of NMTC. Before beginning program measurement, the researchers considered the complexities of NMTC in relation to both its broad mandate in project activity types and its delegation of project selection to a large number of intermediary CDEs (Abravanel et al, 2013). These researchers sought to take into account this diversity so that projects or project types could be evaluated against

their intended goals and desired outcomes most effectively. Another factor considered was the variation in output and outcome timing. Abravanel et al state that some variation may occur and be measurable immediately after financial transactions are closed while others may occur and be measurable shortly after a project is completed or only later. To illustrate this concept, they displayed a logic model that incorporates the timing of outputs and outcomes. A logic model (explained in more detail in future sections) is a diagram depicting the logical relationships among indicators of preexisting conditions, program interventions, program outputs, and program outcomes. It shows the steps that lead from preparation and goal-setting to program actions and, then, to desired outcomes (Abravanel et al, 2013).

The key research questions of the evaluation and the resulting indicators to measure these questions are described in Appendix A. The indicators highlight the comprehensive thoughtfulness of the study and offers insight into how tactical urbanism can be included in a much broader definition of community development.

Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. In 2009, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) introduced the new Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI), a $250 million comprehensive program meant to move beyond "bricks and mortar" (Smith et al, 2010) by transforming neighborhoods of extreme poverty and severely distressed housing into revitalized mixed-income communities with quality affordable housing, high-performing schools, services, transportation, and access to jobs. A key feature of CNI is a focus on sustainability, including financial and social sustainability of the assisted development, economic sustainability of the neighborhood, and environmental sustainability of the development and neighborhood (Smith et al, 2010).

What make CNI unique are the various program activities that are required or are eligible to implement. For instance, CNI transformation plans require energy-efficient housing transformation and

preservation activities, as well as economic self-sufficiency activities that meet all fair housing, accessibility, and replacement housing requirements. Grantees must consider local education efforts within transformation plans (Smith et al., 2010). Furthermore, transformation plans stipulate how displaced residents would acquire mobility counseling, supportive services, and housing search services.

In addition to the required activities, CNI makes eligible a number of community development activities, including the construction, acquisition, or rehabilitation of public, assisted, or privately owned affordable housing; creation of job opportunities and job accessibility; development of critical community improvements; and strengthening of local education opportunities. Additional eligible activities are family support services, rent incentives, work incentives, revolving loan funds, and land banking. Figure 3 presents a breakdown of the required and eligible activities of CNI.

Measuring the success of a program as ambitious as CNI is a tremendous feat. However, Smith et al. (2010) proposed a comprehensive performance measurement system for grantees of CNI that monitors program activities and assesses their outputs and outcomes in achieving the goal of neighborhood transformation.

Figure 3: CNI Required and Eligible Activities

Activities Supported by the Choice Neighborhood Initiative
Required Activities
Rehabilitation and preservation of housing or demolition and replacement of distressed housing projects and incorporation of energy efficiency in design plans
Provision of economic self-sufficiency activities
Preservation of affordable housing in the neighborhood and other activities necessary to ensure that current residents have access to the benefits of the neighborhood transformation
Agreement that returning residents have the option to return or be given preference to onsite or offsite units
Adherence to the replacement of housing units requirement
Adherence to fair housing program
Coordination with support services, mobility counseling, and housing search assistance for those directly affected by revitalization efforts
Resident involvement for planning and implementation of the transformation plan
Tracking of relocated residents
Connections with local education activities

Activities Supported by the Choice Neighborhood Initiative
Eligible Activities
Construction, acquisition, or rehabilitation of public, assisted, and privately owned housing and incorporation of energy efficiency in design plans
Acquisition, demolition, or disposition of properties, including FHA-foreclosed properties
Partnership with local educators and engagement in local community planning
Provision of support services for residents
Provision of work incentives
Partnership with employers to create jobs or job training opportunities
Relocation assistance, including tenant-based rental assistance and supportive services for families
Construction of critical community improvements, including parks, community gardens, environmental improvements, and development or improvement in transit, retail, community financial institutions, and public services
Endowments, reserves, and revolving loan funds
Land assembly and land banking
Activities that promote sustainable neighborhoods and incorporate principles of sustainable design and development
Other activities approved ty the Secretary of HUD

Source: Monitoring Success in Choice Neighborhoods, 2010

While Smith's study is largely a recommendation of how to measure the performance of CNI, it is applicable to this research. Smith proposed a system that includes a core set of indicators tracking progress on common goals and activities across sites as well as the flexibility to collect information on local priorities (Smith et al, 2010). The proposed indicators resulted directly from the stated goals of the program, which were to revitalize distressed properties; transform neighborhoods; and support positive outcomes for residents. Smith et al. also recommended an additional goal—to operate high quality transformation. The indicators used to track the progress of the goals were mix of units, number of community improvements, crime, number of resident services and participants, number of activities and residents involved, sustainability measures, and the involvement of inclusive resident associations (Smith et al., 2010).

The robust set of goals and eligible activities incorporated within CNI help legitimize strategies previously unused by community development programs. Unlike the CDBG research reviewed, it is likely that evaluation of the CNI program will focus on the richness and nuanced nature of neighborhood quality and community development rather than ascribing to efficient indicators of measurement. The legitimacy of tactical urbanism as a community development strategy relies on this broad interpretation of community development evaluation.

Common Themes in Community Development Evaluative Literature

Evaluations conducted on community development programs over the years have been disjointed at best. Consistent assessment, therefore, becomes a problem when determining the efficacy of a program relative to another. Despite this complexity, the literature offers guidance regarding themes that are important to address in evaluating any program and especially related to the argument of this paper. The theme deals with assessing the outcomes of activities.

Given the variety of outcome possibilities for community development programs, the short-term focus of many studies, and the difficulty of obtaining substantive outcome metrics, outcome assessment has not been a consistent priority in program evaluations. Too often, emphasis has been on whether and how projects are initiated and completed as opposed to their results (Abravanel, 2013). This gap in evaluation literature needs to be addressed as it influences other aspects in the chain of community development evaluation. Even if outcomes are measured, there is no single outcome metric that applies across the board. There are likely to be different approaches to measuring that outcome. If, for instance, local institutional capacity is an outcome of interest, measurement may be subjective—involving indicators such as increases in organizational knowledge or extent and nature of citizen involvement (Abravanel et al, 2010). An evaluative process not reflecting the inherent complexity of community development can impact attempts in identifying goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes for future evaluative work and the inclusion of new strategies supporting the broader field of community development.

Tactical Urbanism

Tactical Urbanism Defined

In keeping with the definition proclaimed by Mike Lydon and his work with The Streets Plan Collaborative, I define tactical urbanism as a small scale intervention (e.g., street, block, or building) that attempts to improve the livability and quality of our communities (Lydon, 2012). Lydon states that this approach allows a host of local actors to test new concepts before making substantial political and financial commitments. The key features of this deliberate, incremental approach are illustrated in the figure below.

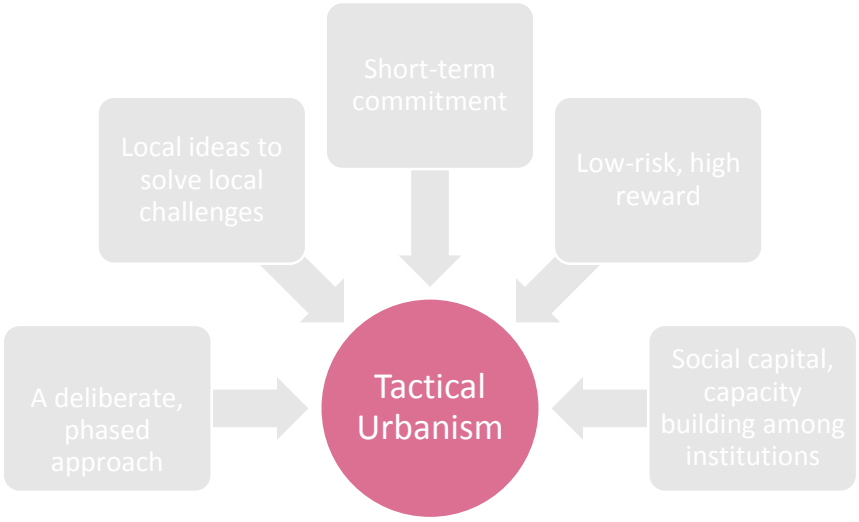


Figure 4: Components of Tactical Urbanism

Tactical Urbanism as Response

In order to understand the parallels among tactical urbanism and federally sponsored community development initiatives, it is important to understand the context in which tactical urbanism has developed. Generally, tactical urbanism formed to fulfill the needs and wants of individuals who saw problems worth fixing in their communities. Specifically, tactical urbanism responds to a constrained system that overlooks—sometimes economically, sometimes politically—and leaves individuals within the system demanding more. Bishop and Williams (2012) state that a confluence of factors have contributed to tactical urbanism, including tough economic times, the emergence of a new kind of creative culture, and a preponderance of stalled development and vacant properties (Greco, 2012).

Hamdi (2004), perhaps one of the most influential academic proponents of tactical urbanism, provides an interesting account of tactical urbanism's response to prevailing conditions. While blaming the current community, market, and state dynamics within the context of increased globalization as influencing the acts of tactical urbanism throughout the world, he also mentions the role researchers and practitioners play in the uneven landscape. He points to the dwindling of resources as a cause for perpetuating top-down hegemonic practices employed by academia. As the competition for funds

increases, so does the demand for academics to distinguish their worth (Hamdi, 2004); this search for distinction is driven by market-specific or client-specific criteria, rather than by subject specific or need-specific criteria. As such, program administrators influences the indicators used to measure community initiatives—thus, indicators of performance, workload planning, role profile analysis and quality assurance criteria are designed to ensure good ratings for the next round of grant awards (Hamdi, 2004). As a result, there is a tendency for academia to establish a sense of "I know what's best." Initiatives become opportunities to provide for others who cannot provide for themselves. Even if technicians and academics invited the community to participate, the participation should be a means to achieving pre-set goals, not an end in its own right (Hamdi, 2012). Hamdi further expresses that participation is an instrument that is largely symbolic; less to do with community control, empowerment or self-determination and more to do with tagging along in the hope that one is not left out when it comes to the distribution of aid. The community follows the plans of bureaucracy; plans do not follow the community. In this case, outputs—defined as short-term points of data for performance purposes—are more important than outcomes, which are long-term changes to society.

Pagano (2013) views tactical urbanism as an alternative to large urban developments implemented by governments, urban planners or large developers, often to the detriment of vulnerable communities. The "bottom-up" approach of tactical urbanism is a strategy community's value; it represents a grassroots democratic ideal of citizen participation. Under his view, citizens create so called spaces of "insurgent citizenship", countering an orientation toward the state as the only legitimate avenue for activities of citizenship (Pagano, 2013). Similar to Hamdi, he argues that many failures in urban development policy rest on the flawed assumption that only experts can determine what a neighborhood needs noting, "Expert planners too often approach neighborhoods with preconceived strategies designed to benefit outside constituents or to counter perceived urban ills" (Pagano, 2013). For instance, in an anecdote that describes a typical community redevelopment

planning process, the city in which the particular redevelopment project was located used a quasi-public entity to carry out the redevelopment project without consulting the residents that were affected (Crowder, 2008).

Alisdairi (2014) uses Lefebvre's idea of "right to the city" to understand the determinants of tactical urbanism. Lefebvre argues that when economic systems value urban space mainly for its exchange value, the true potential of urban life is suppressed (Alisdairi, 2014). However, Lefebvre points out that space in existing urban systems are open to exploitation—for him, the production of space is a "trialectical" process in which conceptions, perceptions and lived experiences of space interact (Lefebvre, 1991). Despite government largely dictating urban spaces, there is always an opportunity for the power to be usurped by acts of appropriation. Communities realize these "acts" in the concept of autogestion. Autogestion refers to democratic participation, worker's self-management, and control of ordinary peoples' destinies (Purcell, 2014). The key is to bring people together to oppose the supremacy of the state and multinational capital (Purcell, 2014). Only through autogestion can the members of a free association take control over their own life, in such a way that it becomes their own work. This is called appropriation, or de-alienation (Alisdairi, 2014).

Increased need for authentic citizen participation is also evident in The Street Plans Collaborative rationale for tactical urbanism as a response to societal factors. The guide states:

> *In the pursuit of equitable progress, citizens are typically invited to engage in a process that is fundamentally broken. Rather than being asked to contribute to incremental change at the neighborhood or block level, residents are asked to react to proposals they often do not understand, and at a scale for which they have little control. For better or for worse, this often results in NIMBYism of the worst kind. Surmounting the challenges inherent to these "public processes continues to prove difficult. Fortunately, cities were not always made this way. We do have alternatives. (The Street Plans Collaborative, 2012).*

Citing broken participatory structures within a larger political context, Hou and Rios offer their account of tactical urbanism's rise. They connect the rising interest in tactical urbanism with the continued state of disinvestment and reallocation of resources. Thus, communities develop approaches that necessitate new relationships between different sectors and forms of decision-making that are more collaborative and informal in nature (Hou and Rios, 2003). Furthermore, they state participatory design and planning is so institutionalized that it no longer meets many of its original goals (Hou and Rios, 2003). They write, "contrary to its original purpose, participation is often used to satisfy mandated requirements and is not intended to fully engage the community. As a result, public participation has become a highly bureaucratic and standardized process" (Hou and Rios 2003).

Bishop and Williams (2012) describe tactical urbanism as a result of economic decline and the proliferation of vacant property. They state that the rise in tactical urbanism has to be observed "within the context of myriad economic, social and technological changes" (Bishop and Williams, 2012). The obsolescence of post-industrial sites and the impact of the economic crisis on private and public investment have produced an abundance of vacant property. The availability of urban vacancies proves significant in allowing temporary activities to unfold (Bishop and Williams, 2012). In addition, changes in working practices, new technology, increasingly mobile lifestyles, and intensified use of public space are all drivers identified (Bishop and Williams, 2012).

Davidson (2013) details an argument that runs counter to the citizen participatory literature mentioned above, which is identified through group interaction. She claims that, in practice, tactical urbanism is highly individualistic and self-motivated. Tactical urbanism allows no space for group deliberation, nor do they have the capacity to do so. The broader public participates by "reacting" (Davidson, 2013). Tactical urbanism has the spirit of "self-help" practices, but risks becoming an elitist movement by representing the very few (Davidson, 2013). However, she goes on to admit that tactical

urbanism does allow some space for public participation. Tactical urbanism initiatives leverage technology to focus on citizen participation, participatory democracy, service delivery, leadership practices and organizational change (Bason, 2013).

In this section, I describe tactical urbanism literature that identifies a few causes that influence tactical urbanism initiatives. Figure 5 presents a diagram that attributes general trends that gave rise to tactical urbanism. Researchers cite government factors like inadequate participatory structures as well as systemic macro effects such as neighborhood blight and decline (e.g., vacant properties) as triggers to implementing tactical urbanism. It is important to indicate a couple of the trends that gave rise to tactical urbanism—economic decline and increased blight—are goals community development initiatives have aimed to address for years. This insight helps build linkages between the goals of tactical urbanism and those of community development, thus establishing what tactical urbanism is meant to do and how it can best supplement community development. The next section offers further insight into how these linkages are further illuminated through a review of the evaluative literature on tactical urbanism.

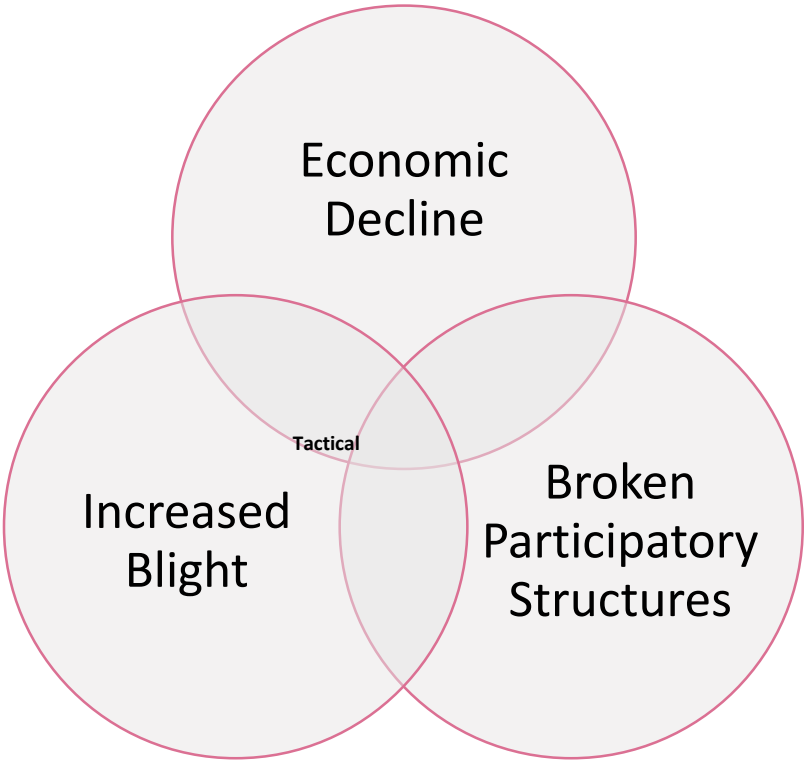


Figure 5: The rise in tactical urbanism may be attributed to these overlapping trends

Evaluative Literature on Tactical Urbanism

There is very little literature surrounding evaluation and tactical urbanism in its modern form. After all, based on previously mentioned research, tactical urbanism inspires individuals to free themselves from bureaucratic systems in order to remake cities as they see fit (Harvey, 2008). Traditionally, stakeholders measure the performance of an initiative using a variety of outcome metrics: poverty rate, property value, job growth, etc. However, when dealing with temporary uses that flirt with ideas of activism and empowerment, the process of evaluation becomes more complex; the facts, the data that might influence policy, greater legitimacy, or simply obtaining necessary funding, are elusive (Zeiger, 2011). If, meaningful data, however, was evaluated and, thus, normatively judged, one can argue that it might hamper the ability to take in the larger picture—affecting the networks of practitioners, the diversity and creation of tactics—at exactly the moment when these self-empowering ground-up initiatives are

beginning to flourish. Thus, the delicate balance in this conflicting relationship must be respected especially as evaluation is used to move informal initiatives to more formal forms of governance. Furthermore, the best practices used by tactical urbanism advocates to market the concept complicate the issue of evaluation even further. Ranging from the broad to the specific, these actions include Park(ing) Day, guerilla gardening, food vendors, pop-up retail, and the Build a Better Block program. While the projects aim to produce livability improvements, as applied to community development, many do not consider them systemic or political urban fixes (Zeiger, 2011).

Outcomes from Tactical Urbanism Initiatives

How then can tactical urbanism inform the burgeoning practice and enhance its effectiveness if there are no indicators used for substantive measurement? Most importantly, how can it relate its initiatives with those of community development? While there are no reliable indicators to evaluate tactical urbanism practices, researchers examining tactical urbanism often point to ideal outcomes that result from implementing such initiatives. The following is an account of outcomes that tactical urbanism is thought to produce.

Authentic local level partnerships. Hamdi (2004) points to partnership and mutuality, not participation, as an outcome of tactical urbanism. He states that, in practice, a triadic relationship between the state, the market and community is rift with mistrust, mutual disrespect, self-interest, conflicting objectives, corruption and unequal power relations (Hamdi, 2004). In contrast, tactical urbanism reshapes our thoughts on governance catalyzing civic engagement where government cooperates with, rather than serves, the community.(Hamdi, 2004). Turnbull (2003) calls this network governance, an inside out structure of organic, social organizations and enterprises rather than command and control hierarchies or power elites.

Edwards (2001) states these acts of association have power because they release social energy; the energy that powers civic society across the globe in its encounter with the state and markets. They provide services that would not otherwise be available, thus enabling local people to develop skills, self-confidence, business experience, and employability.

Pagano (2013) argues that tactical urbanism strengthens democracy in two ways. First, by involving citizens in creating change at the grassroots level, it fosters civic values and strengthen communities. Second, he states that tactical urbanism may even take steps to remedy deficits in the democratic process (Pagano, 2013). Pfeifer (2014) explains tactical urbanism's importance to providing planners and residents an opportunity to collaborate on local projects. Mercer (2006) says tactical urbanism embraces what some may call "cultural planning", involving local communities and traditions. Tactical urbanism is refreshing because meaningful community input into project selection and design from the early stages of a traditionally planned project is rare.

Active Use of Vacant Land. Many tactical urbanism projects reuse vacant land to realize initiatives as the nature of vacant land presents an opportunity for the individual implanting a tactical urbanism project. Vacant land does not interfere with users in the same space. Due to the lack of competing use, tactical urbanism projects are viewed as legitimate and endure with wide normative acceptance whether or not they are legal (Pagano, 2013). Cities that have seen rapid population decline often have an abundance of vacant properties. Tactical urbanism can be used as an intervention to counteract this debilitating trend.

JoAnn Greco's article, From Pop-up to Permanent, affirms the issue of vacant land. She states that vacant lots are certainly a driving impetus for tactical urbanism projects (Greco, 2012). Lehtovuori (2012) states that by allowing temporary use to happen developers can engage with the community in a unique, authentic way. Where properties sit vacant or there exists little demand, temporary activity

provides rental income for the property owner (Lehtovuori, 2012). This can stimulate the local economy with the potential for long-term effects.

Attraction, Awareness, and Information Gathering. Tactical urbanism projects provide information and awareness for long-term, sustainable fixes. In a recent informal survey conducted by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for an Atlanta tactical urbanism project known as Sweet Auburn: Living Beyond Expectations, the community offered useful information for future use of Atlanta's Sweet Auburn district as a vibrant, active corridor inclusive of all ages. The survey revealed that the project improved people's perceptions of the neighborhood. Furthermore, survey respondents felt the project area would feel even safer with later shop hours, programmed public spaces, and permanent cycle tracks. When asked what was missing in the neighborhood, most of the people said they wanted to see more retail, restaurants and better housing options (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2014). ARC's tactical urbanism approach gathered valuable information by staging a demonstration that appealed to the broader community. Rather than staging an uninspired open meeting, the organization galvanized the community and received substantive information for longer term initiatives.

Tactical urbanism also helps the private market by providing a vehicle for local consultation and help to build a bridge between developer and community (Lehtovuori, 2012). The main private benefit of tactical urbanism comes from place making, which if successful can produce an attractive destination (Lehtovuori, 2012). Many view attractiveness of a neighborhood as vibrancy of a neighborhood, which is a goal of many TU projects. The concept of "urban vibrancy" within this context has been qualitatively defined by the American organization, ArtPlace, as "attracting people, activities and value to a place and increasing the desire, and the economic opportunity, to thrive in a place" (ArtPlace, 2011), and the creation of areas of identity and pride for the community (Groth and Corijn, 2005). TU thus creates vibrancy when the public is able to come together for a variety of activities and functions in specific places. Some researchers (e.g. Gehl, 2010; Jacobs, 1961; Zukin, 2010; Campo, 2013) critique traditional,

more top-down urban planning revitalization plans (although seeking similar results as grassroots initiatives) as lacking an important focus— people. "A new town square could be carefully, beautifully designed, but there is no guarantee that people would come and use it. People have a wide variety of motivations, needs and resources that shape their personal capacity and desire to use...space. Indeed, public space is co-produced through the active involvement of the user" (Gehl 2010). Such active involvement of people is needed not only in the planning and development of space but also in the continued appreciation of it. The concept of the 'experience economy', within an intra-urban context, speaks to drawing people back to districts, allowing them to reacquaint themselves to parts of a city with which they may have become unfamiliar, all aspects of vibrancy.

The tactical urbanism literature reviewed illustrates common causes and general options for tactical urbanism as implementation strategy. Some of the major implementation themes overlap with those of community development initiatives. Specifically, active use of vacant land and community engagement through authentic local level partnerships stand out as key tactical urbanism initiatives that parallel with the field of community development. Figure 4 provides an overview of the causes and general implementation mechanisms of tactical urbanism as a strategy.

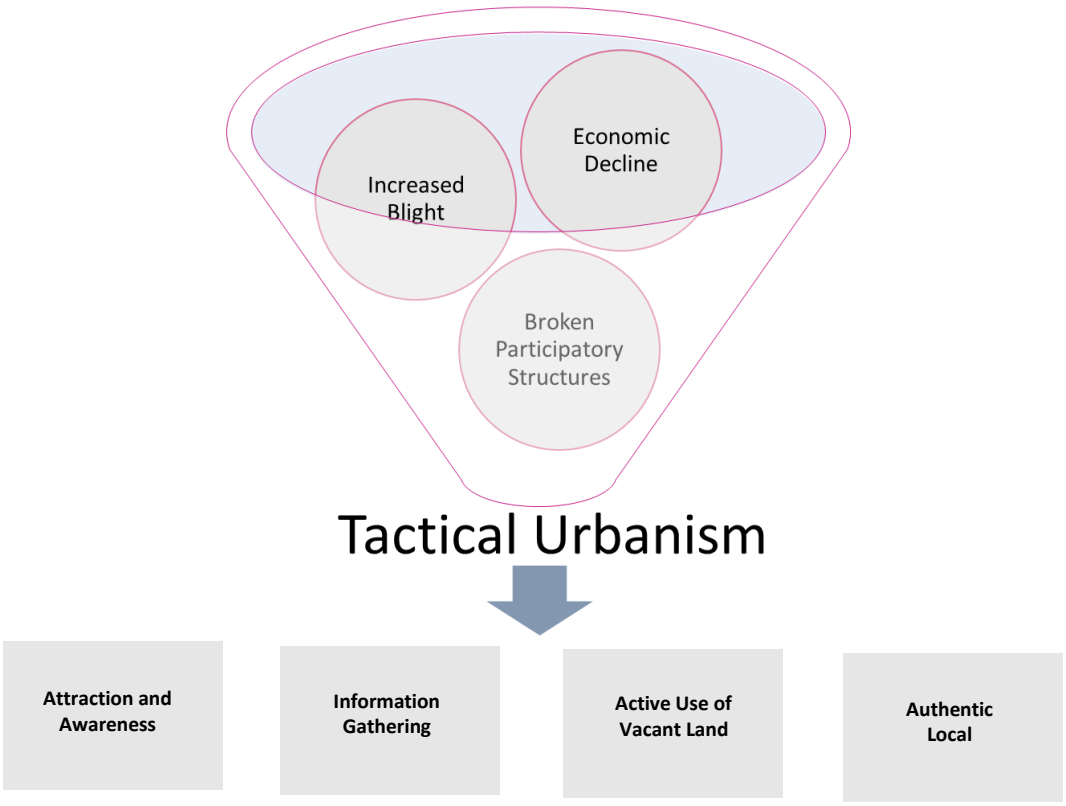


Figure 6: Tactical Urbanism Flow Chart

The goal in the previous sections was to review both the community development and tactical urbanism evaluative literature in hopes of identifying potential linkages between the two. The next few sections will explicitly analyze these linkages using the reviewed literature as a reference. Additionally, the subsequent sections will address the programmatic factors that influence the legitimatization of tactical urbanism, which until this point, has not been fully described.

PART II: METHODOLOGY

The Tactical Urbanism Logic Model

Goals

I use a logic model to analyze the linkages between tactical urbanism and community development. To set up the logic model, I start with the assumption that the purpose of measurement is to monitor and track progress toward stated goals. As defining these goals is a key step in developing a successful logic model (Smith et al, 2010), I derive the goals of this logic model from the CDBG program. I selected these goals because of the program's broad scope, flexibility, and sustained legitimacy within the community development field. Furthermore, CDBG is currently an operational federally sponsored program that tactical urbanism strategies could potentially supplement. Figure illustrates the overarching goals of the CDBG program.

Figure 7: CDBG Goals

Activities

Despite CDBG's relative flexibility, an added feature of the program is its emphasis on funding activities that fall under the federally regulated categories of eligible activities. CDBG regulations necessitate the categories, as they provide structure to the otherwise flexible program. This stipulation coincides well with the next piece of the logic model. Activities must be implemented to effectuate stated goals. HUD considers the following activities eligible under current CDBG guidelines.

CDBG Eligible Activities
Acquisition of Real Property
Disposition
Public Facilities and Improvements
Clearance
Public Services
Interim Assistance
Relocation
Loss of Rental Income
Privately-Owned Utilities
Rehabilitation
Construction of Housing
Code Enforcement
Special Economic Development Activities
Microenterprise Assistance
Special Activities by CBDOs
Homeownership Assistance
Planning and Capacity Building
Program Administration Costs

Figure 8: CDBG Eligible Activities

Outcomes

Following these categories of eligible activities, the outcomes for the CDBG program are as follows:

CDBG Outcomes
The elimination of slums and blight and the prevention of blighting influences and the deterioration of property and neighborhood and community facilities of importance to the welfare of the community, principally persons of low and moderate income
The elimination of conditions which are detrimental to health, safety, and public welfare, through code enforcement, demolition, interim rehabilitation assistance, and related activities
The conservation and expansion of the Nation's housing stock in order to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for all persons, but principally those of low and moderate income
The expansion and improvement of the quantity and quality of community services, principally for persons of low and moderate income, which are essential for sound community development and for the development of viable urban communities
A more rational utilization of land and other natural resources and the better arrangement of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and other needed activity centers
The reduction of the isolation of income groups within communities and geographical areas and the promotion of an increase in the diversity and vitality of neighborhoods through the spatial de-concentration of housing opportunities for persons of lower income and the revitalization of deteriorating or deteriorated neighborhoods
The restoration and preservation of properties of special value for historic, architectural, or esthetic reasons
The alleviation of physical and economic distress through the stimulation of private investment and community revitalization in areas with population outmigration or a stagnating or declining tax base
The conservation of the Nation's scare energy resources, improvement of energy efficiency, and the provision of alternative and renewable energy sources of supply

Figure 9: CDBG Outcomes

Because the goals, activities, and desired outcomes for CDBG are broad, developing linkages with the logic model can encompass a wide array of tactical urbanism initiatives. The tactical urbanism initiatives I use to address this step are found in a body of work known as Tactical Urbanism Vol. 2. I chose to conduct the analysis on this set based on two of its advantages. First, the projects identified in the literature cover a large geographic area that is national in scope. Second, the literature highlights many of the well-known tactical urbanism projects implemented in the United States. Appendix A lists the projects used in the analysis. I will assess the outputs of the activities as another link towards the

outcomes of the CDBG program. Figure 10 illustrates how the elements mentioned above will all connect. The established CDBG goals determined the activities I selected from the tactical urbanism dataset. These activities have their own outputs, which can potentially lead to the outcomes stipulated in CDBG regulation. In a sense, I am attempting to transpose the activities and outputs of tactical urbanism on to an established CDBG system. This method reflects my argument that there are numerous ways to generate community development outcomes.

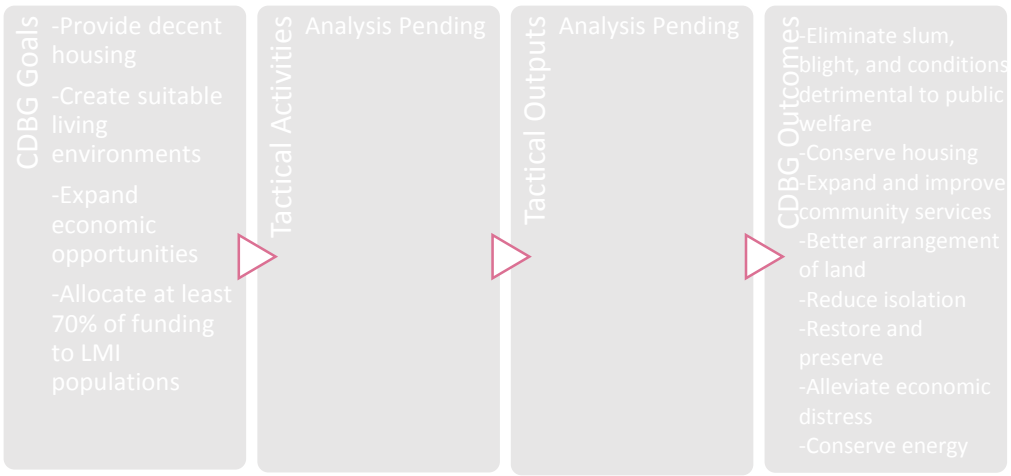


Figure 10: CDBG and Tactical Urbanism Logic Model

Distress Index

The only CDBG goal that the logic model cannot completely account for is the allocation of funds to at least 70 percent of LMI populations. Instead, I analyze this spatially targeted goal using a neighborhood distress index to identify relevant characteristics of communities where the implementation of tactical urbanism projects occurred. The purpose of the index is to identify whether the initiatives are implemented in areas indicative of an above normal low-to-moderate income population percentage as well as other indicators that are indicative of community decline.

In the index, I spatially locate tactical urbanism projects identified in Appendix A. Since tactical urbanism initiatives are local in nature, I use census tracts as the geographic measurement of analysis. The scale is consistent with prevailing community development literature especially as it pertains to describing the conditions of communities. Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county updated by local participants prior to each decennial census as part of the work

done by the Census Bureau. Census tracts are consistently used to measure neighborhood dynamics; however, the unit is inconsistent with neighborhood boundaries constructed within many local jurisdictions. Many neighborhood boundaries are based on historical, political, and social factors that are seldom used to conduct meaningful analysis. In some instances, initiatives included in the dataset consisted of two or more census tracts. I made efforts to include all census tracts covered by each tactical urbanism project.

I collected the following data points as proxies to measure neighborhood distress. I chose indicators that previous researchers consider proxies for neighborhood well-being. Furthermore, the LMI population indicator is used in the Community Development Block Program. Researchers routinely use these indicators to determine the need of community development initiatives within a given geographic location. The following provides a brief description of the indicators used.

- **LMI Population**: HUD provides estimates of the number of persons that can be considered Low, Low to Moderate, and Low, Moderate, and Medium income persons according to annually revised limits. The data is provided at the Census Tract-Block Group level and was summarized to the Census Tract level for the analysis. The statistical information used in the calculation of estimates comes from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS). The total low-to-moderate income population in the census tracts analyzed was the specific indicator used.

- **Unemployment**: This indicator is a 2013 5-year estimate of unemployment within a given census tract. It reflects the S2301 data series compiled through the American Community Survey. The data series estimates the employment status of residents within census tracts who are 16 or older and part of the labor force.

- **Housing Vacancy**: The indicator reflects the B25002 data series compiled through the American Community Survey. The data series estimates the occupancy status of housing units within the United States. The data series reflects the 5-year estimate of 2009 data.

- **Median Family Income**: This indicator is based from the 2012 5-year estimate of median family income within a given census tract in 2012 inflation adjusted dollars. It reflects the B19119 data series compiled through the American Community Survey. The census tract values were benchmarked against the statewide median family income to determine the relative income levels of the tracts.

While not reviewed in the literature, I model the distress index after the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund's distress index from its 2012 application round. It was constructed to determine whether its members served communities facing the highest levels of distress.

I total the raw values of the indicators measured for each census tract in the database to obtain a raw unscaled number. The resulting number is normalized based on the mean and standard deviation of the dataset and scaled between 0 and 1. The scaled number is assigned a value depending on where it fell in the index shown below. While the intervals of the index are somewhat arbitrary, the purpose of providing deeper insight into where these tactical urbanism initiatives are implemented is still served. Figure 11 illustrates the distress index.

Levels of Distress	**Scale**
Not Distressed	< 0.25
Somewhat Distressed	< 0.50
Moderately Distressed	< 0.75
Highly Distressed	<= 1.0

Figure 11: Distress Index

Programmatic Design

An integral component in determining whether tactical urbanism initiatives can support traditional community development is the concept's ability to adapt to the design of local community development programming. Tactical urbanism represents new relationships and forms of decision-making between different sectors that are more collaborative and informal in nature (Hou and Rios, 2003). The differences between the two approaches may prompt incongruences that require further exploration.

To analyze this more fully, I measure how well a local government community development program matches with the approach of many tactical urbanism initiatives. I defined the approach of many tactical urbanism initiatives in previous sections.

I use the City of Atlanta and its implementation of the CDBG program to measure the ability of local government community development program delivery to meet the needs of tactical urbanism initiatives. Since passing the CDBG Reform Act of 2006, HUD required grantees to submit a performance plan outlining their plans for implementing a competitive grant program. The specific documents I use to measure the program's ability to meet the needs of tactical urbanism are below followed by a brief description.

- **City of Atlanta 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan**- The receipt of CDBG is conditioned upon the periodic submission to HUD of a comprehensive 5-year Consolidated Plan. The plan identifies the proposed goals for the money received as well as outlining the process to establishing the proposed goals. Specifically, the plan is used in this paper to identify the citizen participation and consultation process to develop the proposed goals.

- **2015 Proposal Application Instructions for Applying for Funding Under the 2015 City of Atlanta Consolidated Plan Programs**- The document provides information about program requirements, policies, and the application process for funds provided to the City of Atlanta under HUD Consolidated Plan programs.

Interviews by local and national tactical urbanism practitioners as well as managers of community development programs provide greater depth to the analysis of the above documents.

PART III: FINDINGS

Logic Model

Goals

The first step in identifying the connections between tactical urbanism initiatives and CDBG goals and outcomes is to understand the relationship among the initiatives and CDBG's three broad goals. Namely, to-provide decent housing, create suitable living environments, and expand economic opportunities. Figure 12 illustrates the results of these findings. As noted in Figure 12, approximately 80% of the tactical urbanism initiatives analyzed match the criteria of CDBG's goals. Of the 26 tactical urbanism initiatives within the database, the goal to "create suitable living environments" produced the most results with approximately 68% of initiatives falling within the category. One can speculate that the high percentage of tactical urbanism initiatives falling under this particular category indicates the broad and general nature of the goal. Many different activities can fulfill the goal of creating a suitable living environment. This feature makes the CDBG program extremely attractive as a resource for tactical urbanism and its varied initiatives.

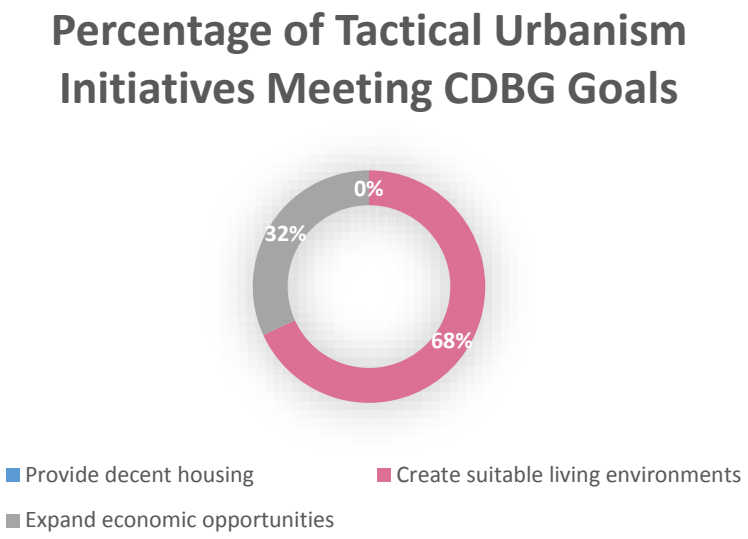


Figure 12: Percentage of Tactical Urbanism Initiatives Meeting CDBG Goals

Thirty-two percent of initiatives matched the goal of "expanding economic opportunities." It is logical for the percentage of activities qualifying under this goal to decrease relative the previous goal as it is more restrictive in nature. Nevertheless, a sizeable portion of initiatives still meet the goal, which indicates tactical urbanism initiatives can meet the criteria of more specific goals. Not surprisingly, there were no initiatives that met the criteria to "provide decent housing." While there is evidence of tactical urbanism approaches to produce affordable living arrangements-especially internationally- many consider housing a permanent implementation, which is not conducive to the tactical urbanism framework described in this paper.

Activities

The second step in identifying the connections among tactical urbanism initiatives to CDBG goals and outcomes is to consider how the initiatives match the criteria of CDBG's eligible activities. The activities provide a more restrictive lens in reconciling the two. For instance, while an initiative can generally fall

under the goal of creating suitable living environments, the specific categories CDGB permits for local funding can rule out initiatives that do not match the criteria. With this understanding, Figure 13 illustrates the tactical urbanism initiatives that meet the criteria of the eligible activities. Despite the greater specificity of the eligible activity categories, the total number of tactical urbanism initiatives that matched the criteria did not change. Approximately 80% of initiatives are eligible under the specific categories outlined.

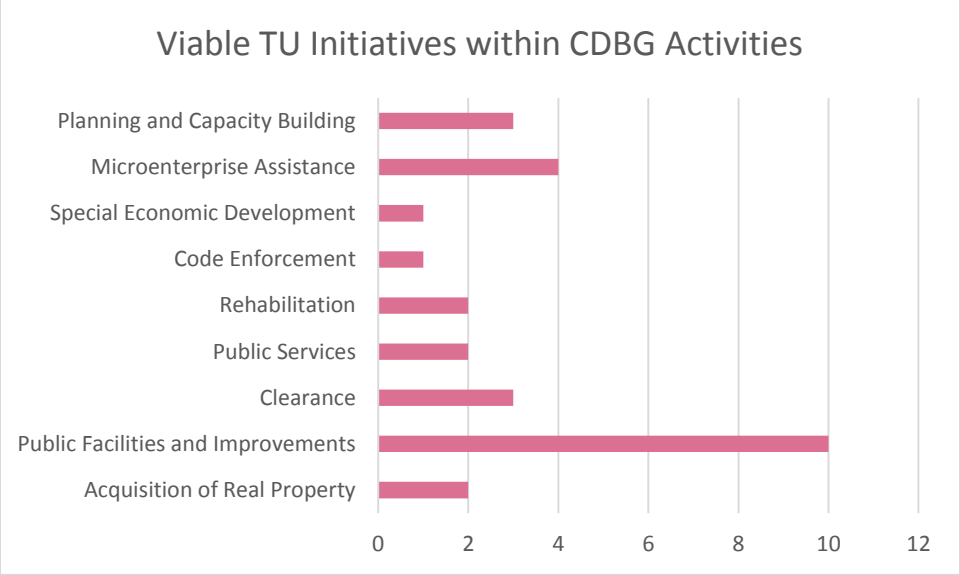


Figure 13: Viable Tactical Urbanism Initiatives within CDBG Activities

Nearly 40 percent of the 26 matches identified fit the Public Facilities and Improvements category. This relatively high percentage could be the result of some initiatives explicitly denoting a concern with their respective local jurisdiction's current provision of public improvements. Many of the initiatives that qualified sought to improve the function of street intersections, bike infrastructure, sidewalks, and parks, to name a few. Moreover, they envisioned new ways of providing public services and improvement.

In Microenterprise Assistance, about 15% of the initiatives match the particular category. While not at Public Facilities and Improvement levels, tactical urbanism seems to have a natural advantage in this arena. Initiatives such as pop-up shops, micro-mixing, and mobile vendors tend to gravitate to the realm of tactical urbanism given its relative low cost to enter the market and conduct business.

Another insight of Table 6 is the number and character of categories that tactical urbanism initiatives did not meet. Of the 19 categories available, 10 initiatives could not be matched with any. This is important as much of the pushback of tactical urbanism as a legitimate strategy for community development details its inability to make lasting improvements to chronic social issues such as poverty assistance and the provision of affordable services. The categories that did not match any of the tactical urbanism initiatives tend to need longer term, more complex activities to qualify. For example, the relocation category requires that funds be used for relocation payments and assistance to displaced persons. This is a timely activity that requires costly programming to be effective. There is no way for tactical urbanism to achieve this type of impact. Nonetheless, it is promising to see that tactical urbanism initiatives can potentially be used to support the efforts of one of the nation's oldest community development initiatives.

Distress Index

The purpose of the CDBG program is to affect change in the lives of low-to-moderate income populations (LMI). To achieve this objective, at least 70 percent of total allocations at the grantee level must be applied to areas with a sizeable LMI population. Specifically, the program requires that funds are targeted to areas that have at least a 51% LMI population. The LMI criteria is an important hurdle for tactical urbanism to overcome. One of the critiques of the concept is that initiatives are done in areas that are under no real distress (i.e., poverty, severe unemployment, high housing vacancy). While this may be true in aggregate, the results of my analysis presents a more nuanced perspective.

According to the distress index, approximately 25% of all tactical urbanism initiatives in the study were moderately distressed or higher. This indicates that a sizeable portion of census tracts that benefited from a tactical urbanism initiative had some combination of distress (See Figure 14). If the low-to-moderate income category is isolated, the results are surprising. Out of the total census tracts included in the analysis, over half (~60%) of the tracts are over the CDBG LMI threshold. This statistic runs counter to the popular belief that tactical urbanism initiatives benefit well-to-do areas.

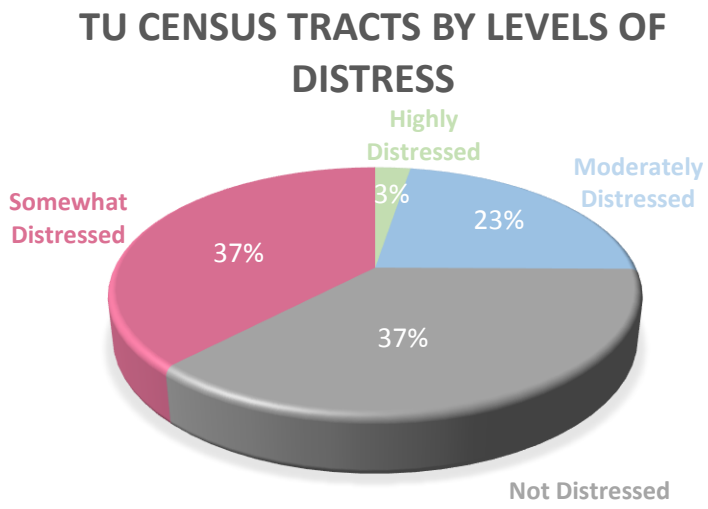


Figure 14: Tactical Urbanism Census Tracts by Levels of Distress

Table 8 illustrates the regional variations of the four indicators used for the distress index. Astoundingly, many of the regions experienced above normal averages of the distress indicators. All nine of the regions have at least one indicator that are above normal levels of distress. Even though the findings are promising, it is important to note that much of the data was pulled during the most recent recession. Therefore, the data may be skewed to more extreme outcomes. Despite this data management concern, the work done by tactical urbanists clearly show their ability to reach distressed communities.

Regional Variations of TU Census Tracts

	Percent of Vacant Land	Low-Mod Percentage	Percentage of Unemployment	Median Family Income 2012
East North Central	16%	69%	15%	$49,320
East South Central	16%	64%	20%	$35,685
Middle Atlantic	20%	48%	11%	$105,681
Mountain	14%	67%	11%	$51,614
New England	7%	51%	6%	$82,842
Pacific	8%	51%	10%	$78,107
South Atlantic	18%	56%	10%	$64,416
West North Central	10%	62%	11%	$51,489
West South Central	16%	67%	13%	$41,707
Total Average	**13%**	**56%**	**11%**	**$70,138**

Figure 15: Regional Variations of Census Tracts and Levels of Distress

Programmatic Design

While it is important to show that tactical urbanism initiatives can supplement methods of community development especially at the federal level, it is nearly equally important to understand if the programmatic elements of these community development programs are congruent with the general approach of tactical urbanism. No matter how well intentioned a project ultimately is, it can be stalled due to unexpected bureaucracy. To understand this insight at a deeper level, I look at the City of Atlanta's implementation of CDBG to get a sense of how tactical urbanism proposals would fair in the process. I base my analysis on criteria developed from tactical urbanism strategies The Streets Collaborative cited as general attributes many tactical urbanism strategies share, which I defined previously in the literature.

These approaches coalesce around major themes—incremental stability, flexibility, time horizon, barriers to entry, and citizen engagement. Questions that derive from the themes help guide our analysis in identifying incongruences with CDBG program implementation and the approaches of tactical urbanism. The themes and resulting questions are shown below.

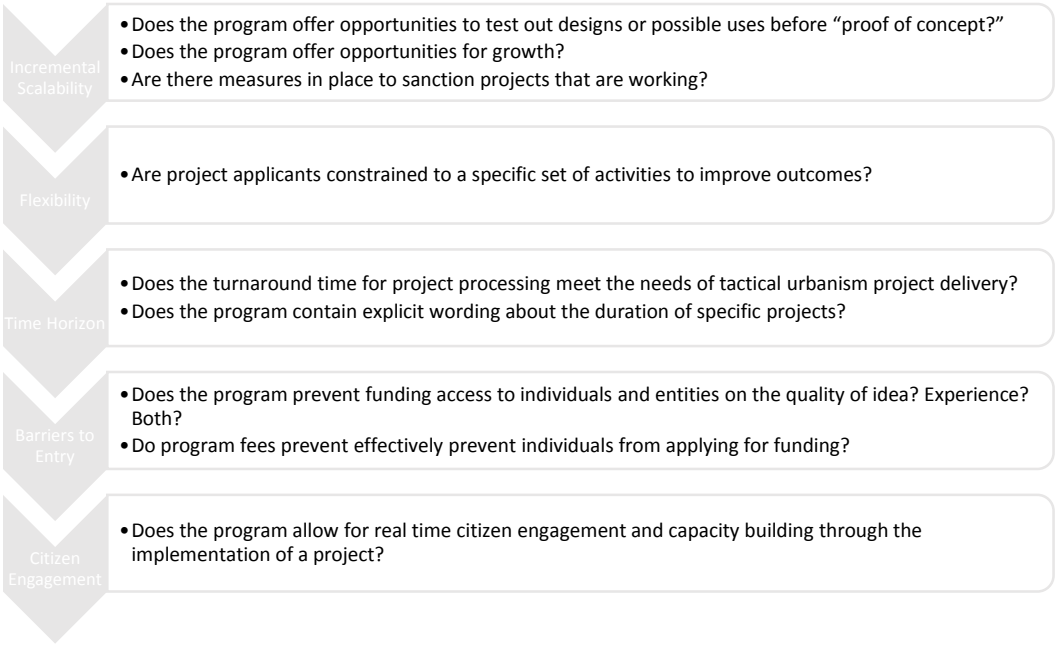


Figure 16: Programmatic Questionnaire

This programmatic checklist informs how responsive the 2015 CDBG application process is to tactical urbanism approaches. Overall, the program's implementation process checks out on four of the nine questions asked, a welcoming finding. It shows that the CDBG program, at least in the City of Atlanta, has a foundation from which to build. The program can build upon its strengths to move towards a process more inclusive of tactical urbanism. However, despite the potential, there are lingering problem areas that prevent tactical urbanism approaches from truly taking hold. For instance, the fact that it takes at least a full year to disperse funds from the point an application is submitted is a concern. Tactical urbanism initiatives need quick turnaround times to reduce their overall expense levels.

Moreover, the dead time between the application submission process and funding dispersal prevents real time feedback and outreach to the community. Another concern is the implementation process' high barrier to entry. The following are required before applicants are eligible to apply:

- Agency must have had 501(c)(3) non-profit status *at least 2 full years* or have *2 full years* of operating experience under another non-profit entity that meets this criteria.
- Agency must have an audit/audited financial statement that was completed within past 18 months.
- Agency must have written financial and grants management procedures.
- Agency must have at least 12 months of experience that is similar or related to the activities for which funding is being requested from City.
- Agency must have its incorporation recognized by GA Secretary of State's office; corporation must be in good standing.

Sponsors of projects that are applying for funding in the City of Atlanta's (COA) Consolidated Plan (CP) Funds Proposal application must have an established track record. Often times, tactical urbanism initiatives start with little formal experience or capacity. The regulations stated above effectively prohibit newly formed organizations from participating in the CDBG application process. Table 9 describes the comparison between the City of Atlanta's CDBG program proposal application process and the City of Los Angeles's People's Street program. The People's Street program is similar to COA's program as both are sponsored by the government. However, the People's Street program was specifically designed to accommodate tactical urbanism approaches.

The People's Street program does a better job of accommodating tactical urbanism approaches. Specifically, the program's implementation process checks out on six out of the nine total questions addressed. The three questions that were not satisfied included one in

incremental stability, one in flexibility, and one in barriers to entry. Two of the questions shared similar answers with COA's program. This may deal with the programs having to conform to local government regulations.

Survey of Programmatic Questionnaire		
	2015 City of Atlanta CP Funds Proposal Application	City of Los Angeles Department of DOT-People's Street Program
Incremental Scalability		
Does the program offer opportunities to test out designs or possible uses before "proof-of-concept?"	No	No
Does the program offer opportunities for growth (i.e. projects can apply for additional rounds of funding)?	Yes	Yes
Are there measures in place to sanction projects that are working?	No	Yes
Flexibility		
Are project applicants constrained to a specific set of activities to improve outcomes?	No	Yes
Time Horizon		
Does the turnaround time for project processing meet the needs of tactical urbanism project delivery?	No	Yes
Does the program contain explicit wording about the duration of specific projects?	No	No
Barriers to Entry		
Does the program prevent funding access to individuals and entities based on the quality of idea? Experience? Both?	Yes	Yes
Do program fees effectively prevent individuals from applying for funding?	No	No
Citizen Engagement		
Does the program allow for real-time citizen engagement and capacity building through the implementation of a project?	No	Yes

Figure 17: Survey of Programmatic Questionnaire

Part IV: Discussion

Given the findings, there is evidence that tactical urbanism approaches can support community development goals and outcomes sponsored at the federal level. However, the current programmatic infrastructure surrounding community development programs would have to change drastically in order to meet the needs of these new approaches. Additionally, local jurisdictions should think creatively when creating locally regulated programs to begin addressing society need. More specifically, local jurisdictions must understand ways to work *with* the public rather than *for* the public.

Despite the limited scope of the study, CDBG—the longest standing community development program—aligns well with the tactical urbanism initiatives analyzed in this particular study which is great news. The nation's most flexible source of community development has seen a steady decline in funding over the last twenty years (Abravanel, 2010). The decrease makes providing funds to costlier community development options much more difficult than in previous decades. Tactical urbanism provides an alternative option. CDBG and other government funds similar to it can serve as start-up funding for initiatives just getting off the ground. Alternatively, the funds can provide the gap financing necessary to make a tactical urbanism initiative grow to scale.

The advantage of CDBG as a federal program in reaching many local jurisdictions can also turn into a disadvantage when implementing the program at a local level, especially when an entity wants to leverage the program for the purpose of tactical urbanism. In the case of federal programs such as CDBG, the federal formulation of a policy is later implemented at subnational levels by either states or local governments (Nakamura & Smallwood, 1980). This gives flexibility to local jurisdictions when creating local policy design to meet the needs of their constituent populations. However, in practice, the flexibility these programs afford local jurisdictions may not turn into real outcomes. For instance,

CDBG contains inadequacies including an "unclear program purpose, the inability to address the specific stated problem of revitalizing distressed urban communities, a lack of targeting efforts… to reach intended beneficiaries, a lack of long-term goals and performance measures to focus on outcomes, the inadequate collection of grantee data in a timely and credible manner, and an inability to provide public access to this data in a transparent manner" (OMB 2006, 1-11). Now, efforts to strengthen the program and make it more effective are continually proposed and presented to members of Congress. These attempts demonstrate the program's willingness to reform so that it can become a more efficient, transparent, and outcomes-based program. The emphasis in making the program more efficient, however, undercuts the program to serve tactical urbanism and, ultimately, be a catalyst for innovation. Efficiency–which can spawn a "one-size-fits-all" approach to managing a program—can deny many potentially effective—albeit unproven—initiatives that could come from tactical urbanism.

Due to this top-down push for efficiency, programs similar to CDBG may not be the best option for entities seeking support for a tactical urbanism initiative. Programs initiated at the local level, tailored specifically to the approach of tactical urbanism, provide promise and precedence.

People's Street, a City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation program, collaborates with communities to transform underused areas of city streets into active, vibrant, and accessible public space (People St. Website, 2015). It is unique in that eligible community partners can apply for approval to create projects that enhance the quality of life in three areas—by providing plazas, parklets, and bicycle corrals. Furthermore, the program provides an accelerated "one-stop-shop" that allows community members the opportunity to identify an appropriate site, conduct research, raise funds, install project elements, and provides and fund long-term management, maintenance, and operations of the project (People St. Website, 2015). The model the City of Los Angeles uses can be replicated in areas without sanctioned programs to deal with tactical urbanism projects. Cities such as the City of Atlanta can look to this program as a model in developing a program of its own. However, products

must be prioritized before establishing cross-department collaboration and streamlined services such as offering easier permitting.

Part V: Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

Considering these observations on the linkages between the field of community development and tactical urbanism, I provide a few recommendations to individuals in the public sector wanting to incorporate tactical urbanism in their broader strategy of community development. First, to the extent that evaluation influences outcomes and strategies included in future iterations of community development, a more comprehensive approach to evaluation must be pursued. Achieving neighborhood quality and well-being is a complex undertaking that deserves comprehensive evaluative criteria that can uncover the richness of the various outcomes and outputs of a particular initiative. Abravanel's recent evaluation of NMTC comes closer than anyone to accounting for the varied outputs and activities of the program. This type of evaluation broadens the scope of determinants that influence neighborhood quality, thus, leaving room for strategies such as tactical urbanism to be included in the evaluative framework.

At first take, federally sponsored community development programs present a number of bureaucratic and political hurdles to keep strategies such as tactical urbanism from fully being incorporated as eligible activities. Despite this obstacle, a few innovative tweaks can still provide a local jurisdiction the benefits of implementing tactical urbanism. Due to the flexibility of the community development programs covered in this paper, funds from these sources can be diverted to a fund specifically catered to tactical urbanism. This option circumvents the programmatic challenges and creates a unique program that favors the advantages of tactical urbanism. A number of local jurisdictions are including this option in their tool set, making great strides to improve the lives of its constituents. In order for this option to work, however, jurisdictions must accomplish inter-

departmental collaboration in order to streamline process requirements such as permitting and application standards to ensure tactical urbanism initiatives have the greatest probability of execution.

It is a dynamic period in cities and towns throughout the country. Through the field of tactical urbanism, citizens are empowered to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods and communities. Local governments can partner with these honorable individuals in the pursuit of developing better communities everywhere.

Part VI: Bibliography

Abravanel, Martin D. "Evaluating community and economic development programs: A literature review to inform evaluation of the New Markets Tax Credit Program." (2010).

Alisdairi, Lana K. "A Cry and a Demand: Tactical Urbanism and the Right to the City." PhD diss., University of Washington, 2014.

Artplace. 2011. Invitation for letter of Inquiry Accessed 24 Nov 2014. http://www.artplaceamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/LOI-Guidelines.pdf

Atlanta Regional Commission. 2014. Tactical Urbanism Demonstration Project Summary Report. Atlanta Regional Commission

Campo, Daniel. 2013. The Accidental Playground: Brooklyn Waterfront Narratives of the Undesigned and Unplanned.

Davidson, Mariko Mura. "Tactical urbanism, public policy reform, and'innovation spotting'by government: from Park (ing) Day to San Francisco's parklet program." PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013.

Benner, Sophia Michelle. "Tactical urbanism: from civil disobedience to civic improvement." PhD diss., 2013.

Bishop, Peter, and Lesley Williams. *The temporary city*. London: Routledge, 2012.

Bleakly, Kenneth, Mary Joel Holin, Laura Fitzpatrick, and Laurent Hodes. 1983. A Case Study of Local Control over Housing Development: The Neighborhood Strategy Area Demonstration. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research.

Connell, James P. *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives. Concepts, Methods, and Contexts. Roundtable on Comperhensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families*. Aspen Institute, Publications Office, PO Box 222, 109 Houghton Lab Lane, Queenstown, MD 21658, 1995.

Davidson, Mariko Mura. "Tactical urbanism, public policy reform, and'innovation spotting'by government: from Park (ing) Day to San Francisco's parklet program." PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2013.

de Souza Briggs, Xavier, Elizabeth J. Mueller, and Mercer L. Sullivan. *From neighborhood to community: Evidence on the social effects of community development*. Community Development Research Center, Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy, New School for Social Research, 1997.

Dommel, Paul R., and Michael J. Rich. "The Rich Get Richer The Attenuation of Targeting Effects of the Community Development Block Grant Program."*Urban Affairs Review* 22, no. 4 (1987): 552-579.

Drier, Peter, J. Mollenkopf, and Todd Swanstrom. "Place matters." (2004).

Edwards, M. 2001. The Rise and Rise of Civil Society. Developments, 14: 7.

Ferguson, Ronald F., and William T. Dickens, eds. *Urban problems and community development*. Brookings Institution Press, 2011.

Greco, JoAnn. "From Pop-Up to Permanent." *Planning* 78, no. 9 (2012).

Galster, George, Peter Tatian, and John Accordino. "Targeting investments for neighborhood revitalization." Journal of the American Planning Association 72, no. 4 (2006): 457-474.

Galster, George, Christopher Walker, Christopher Hayes, Patrick Boxall, and Jennifer Johnson. "Measuring the impact of community development block grant spending on urban neighborhoods." *Housing Policy Debate* 15, no. 4 (2004): 903-934.

Gehl, Jan. 2010. Cities for People. Washington, DC: Island Press

Gittell, M. (2001). Empowerment zones: An opportunity missed—A six-city comparative study. NewYork: Howard Samuels State Management and Policy Center, The Graduate School and University Center of The City University of New York.

Groth, Jacqueline, and Eric Corijn. 2005. “Reclaiming Urbanity: Indeterminate Spaces, Informal Actors and Urban Agenda Setting.” Urban Studies 42 (3): 503–26. doi:10.1080/00420980500035436.

Hamdi, Nabeel. *Small change: about the art of practice and the limits of planning in cities*. Routledge, 2013.

Harvey, David. "The right to the city." (2008): 23-40.

Hebert, S., A. Vidal, G. Mills, F. James, and D. Gruenstein. 2001. “Interim Assessment of the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) Program: A Progress Report.” Office of Policy Development and Research, available online at: www.huduser.org/ Publications/pdf/ezec report.pdf

Hollister, Robinson. 2007 “Measuring the Impact of CDFI Activities,” in Financing Low-Income Communities, edited by Julia Sass Rubin, 265-310. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Hou, Jeffrey, and Michael Rios. "Community-Driven Place Making." *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 1 (2003): 19-27.

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. The Death and Life of Great American Cities.

Lefebvre, Henri. The production of space. Vol. 142. Blackwell: Oxford, 1991.

Lehtovuori, P. a. (2012). Temporary Uses as Means of Experimental Urban Planning . *UDK Brojevi ,* 29-54.

Mercer, Colin. "Cultural planning for urban development and creative cities."*unpublished paper* (2006): 8.

MKGK Incorporated. 1980. Assessment of Urban County Performance: Community Development Block Grant Program. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research.

Nathan, Richard, Paul Dommel, Sarah Liebschutz, and Milton Morris. 1977. Monitoring the Block Grant Program for Community Development. Political Science Quarterly 92:219–44.

Oakley, Deirdre, and HUI-SHIEN TSAO. "A new way of revitalizing distressed urban communities? Assessing the impact of the federal empowerment zone program." Journal of Urban Affairs 28, no. 5 (2006): 443-471.

O'Connor, Alice. "Swimming against the tide: A brief history of federal policy in poor communities." *Urban problems and community development* (1999): 77-137.

Orlebeke, Charles J., and John C. Weicher. "How CDBG Came to Pass."*Housing Policy Debate* 24, no. 1 (2014): 14-45.

Pagano, Celeste. "DIY Urbanism: Property and Process in Grassroots City Building." Marq. L. Rev. 97 (2013): 335-469.

Pfeifer, Laura. "Tactical urbanism and the role of planners". PhD diss., McGill University, 2013.

Pooley, Karen Beck. "Using Community Development Block Grant Dollars to Revitalize Neighborhoods: The Impact of Program Spending in Philadelphia."*Housing Policy Debate* 24, no. 1 (2014): 172-191.

Purcell, Mark. 2014. "Possible Worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City." Journal of Urban Affairs 36 (1): 141–54. doi:10.1111/juaf.12034.

Rich, Michael. 1993. Federal Policymaking and the Poor: National Goals, Local Choices, and Distributional Outcomes. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Riposa, Gerry. "From Enterprise Zones to Empowerment Zones The Community Context of Urban Economic Development." *American Behavioral Scientist* 39, no. 5 (1996): 536-551.

Sawicki, David S., and Patrice Flynn. "Neighborhood indicators: A review of the literature and an assessment of conceptual and methodological issues."*Journal of the American Planning Association* 62, no. 2 (1996): 165-183.

Smith, Robin E. "Monitoring success in choice neighborhoods: A proposed approach to performance measurement." (2010).

Tactical Urbanism 2: Short Term Action, Long Term Change. 2012.

Thomson, Dale E. "Strategic, Geographic Targeting of Housing and Community Development Resources A Conceptual Framework and Critical Review." *Urban Affairs Review* 43, no. 5 (2008): 629-662.

Turnbull, Shann. "Network governance." Corporate Governance International 6, no. 3 (2003): 4-14.

Urban Institute. 1994. Federal Funds, Local Choices: An Evaluation of the Community Development Block Grant Program. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research.

Vidal, Avis. *Rebuilding communities: A national study of urban community development corporations*. Community Development Research Center, Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy, New School for Social Research, 1992.

Walker, Christopher, and Patrick Boxall. 1996. Economic Development. In Reality and Research: Social Science and U.S. Urban Policy since 1960, ed. George Galster, 13–38. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Wong, Kenneth, and Paul Peterson. 1986. Urban Response to Federal Program Flexibility: Politics of Community Development Block Grants. Urban Affairs Quarterly 21:293–309.

Zeiger, Mimi. The Interventionist's Toolkit: 3 Places Journal, September 2011. Accessed 24 Nov 2014. https://placesjournal.org/article/the-interventionists-toolkit-our-cities-ourselves/

Zukin, Sharon. 2010. Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places.Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Part VII: Appendix

Appendix A: Name of Tactical Urbanism Initiatives

Name of Tactical Urbanism Initiatives
Open Streets
Play Streets
Build A Better Block
Park(ING) Day
Gurerilla Gardening
Pop-Up Retail
Pavement to Plazas
Pavement to Parks
Pop-Up Cafes
Depave
Chair Bombing
Food Carts/Trucks
Site Pre-Vitalization
Pop-Up Town Hall
Intersection Repair
Park Mobile
Weed Bombing